Lionel set was start of hobby

Bob Willer earns MMR No. 222

I started in the hobby, like most of us, with the usual Lionel set at Christmas.

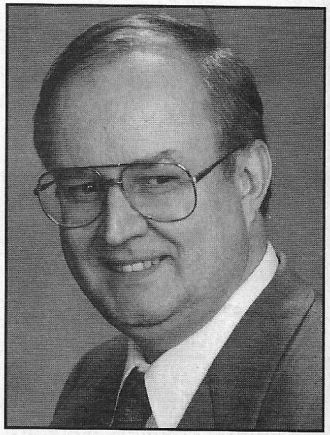
During my high school days, hobby time was pretty much divided between airplanes and trains. However, I finally came to the realization that the trains didn't crash and have to be replaced nearly as often as the aircraft and consequently have been in HO ever since.

My wife Carol and I live on Grand Island, a town in the Niagara River between Buffalo and Niagara Falls. I own a small engineering firm in Amherst, NY (North Star Design) and enjoy travel and photography. Sounds very typical.

Carol deserves a large share of the credit (or blame?) by being more understanding than most, as she is a 1:1 scale fan and actually likes railfanning and riding on the prototype (which isn't too hard to take).

We have four grown children (or so they say), two of each, all of whom have been interested to varying degrees in what goes on in the basement.

Speaking of which, I'm now on my third major layout, 24 foot square, depicting Buffalo and vicinity in the '30s. The layout is New York Central orientated, run by Railcommand with hand-laid track, the hard shell scenery is about 70 percent completed. My preferences are for building historically accurate structures and the research that goes with them.



Peter Moffett deserves credit for both for inspiring me with his excellent modeling and shepherding me through the Achievement Program. I would also like to thank Mike Pyszczek and Clark Kooning whom, along with Pete and others, have provided the friendship and camaraderie we all find such a enjoyable part of the hobby.

I'm looking forward to maintaining my involvement in the Niagara Frontier Region and the International Division as well as meeting all of you at future conventions.•